

REMARKS

The Office action of September 7, 2005, has been carefully considered.

Objection has been raised to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) on the basis that the subject matter of claim 15 is not shown in the drawings. Claim 15 has now been canceled from the application on this basis only. The subject matter of claim 15 is still considered to be encompassed by the broad other claims of the application.

Claims 1-6, 8-14, 19 and 20 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(a) over Binh et al. In addition, claim 16 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Binh et al, claim 7 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Binh et al in view of Yoshiyasu, and claim 15 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Binh et al in view of Matsumoto.

It is clear that the Binh et al reference represents the work of the present inventors; Binh is inventor Binh Vu Thien, and inventors J.P. Dupin and P. Thevenard are also named on the article. The actual publication date of the article is not known. Assuming that the date of distribution to the public was during March or April 2000, as indicated on the article, the publication date is before the filing of the present PCT application on May 12, 2000, but after the filing of the corresponding priority application on May 12, 1999.

Applicants submit herewith a verified translation of FR 99 06254, the application on which priority is claimed on the declaration of the present application. A review of this application will verify that the present claims are entitled to the filing date of May 12, 1999.

As Applicants were in possession of the invention prior to the publication of Binh et al, Applicants request withdrawal of all rejections based on Binh et al.

Minor corrective amendments have been made to claims 1 and 5.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early allowance of the application with amended claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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